

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

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R 142133Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5728

INFO DA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

SUBJECT: COLOMBIAN ARMY COMMANDER DENIES CHARGES OF USE OF SOLDIERS  
AS GUINEA PIGS

1. A CHARGE MADE BY REPRESENTATIVE GILBERTO ZAPATA ISAZA DURING A HOUSE SESSION ON 7 NOV 74 THAT COLOMBIAN SOLDIERS WERE BEING USED AS GUINEA PIGS FOR SUSPICIOUS EXPERIEMENTS BY FOREIGN DOCTORS PROBABLY FROM THE US WAS DENIED BY THE COMMANDER OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY M/GEN VALENCIA TOVAR ON 9 NOV. ZAPATA A MEMBER OF THE LEFTIST COALITION PARTY "UNO" CHARGED IN A HOUSE DEBATE OVER DRUGS THAT THE SOLDIERS WERE BEING INOCULATED WITH AN UNKNOWN PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT AND THEN MADE TO PARTICIPATE IN ENTENSE PHYSICAL EXERCISE. IN HIS EXPLANATION OF THE PROGRAM MAJ GEN VALENCIA TOVAR SAID THAT THERE WAS NOTHING SECRET OR SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE PROCEDURE. HE STATED THAT IT IS A SCIENTIFIC EXPERIEMENT REGARDING SKIN DISEASES BEING CONDUCTED BY DOCTORS OF DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES ESPECIALLY IN THE TROPICAL ZONE. HE CONTINUED THAT IT WAS THE ARMY'S BELIEF THAT THE RESULTS WOULD BE A BENEFIT TO ALL MANKIND.

2. THE TEAM IN QUESTION IS HEADED BY DR ALFRED M. ALLEN OF LETTERMAN ARMY RESEARCH INSTITUTE ASSISTED BY PROFESSOR DAVID TAPLIN A DERMATOLOGIST FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI AND 3

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RESEARCH ASSISTANTS. THIS TEAM WAS GIVEN WRITTEN PERMISSION

BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TO CONDUCT A MONTH LONG STUDY OF SKIN INFECTIONS IN SOLDIERS. THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY OFFERED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO STUDY A POPULATION OF SIMILAR ETHNIC BACKGROUND LIVING IN WIDELY DIFFERENT CLIMATES. THE STUDY CONSISTED OF 4PARTS: (1) TAKING A MEDICAL HISTORY BY MEANS OF A QUESTIONNAIRE (2) PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF THE SUBJECTS SKIN (3) OBTAINING SPECIMENS FROM NORMAL AND ABNORMAL SKIN AREAS AND (4) DRAWING A SAMPLE OF BLOOD FOR SEROLOGIC ANALYSIS. ALL RESULTS ARE TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES. THE TEAM WORKED ON A SCHEDULE ARRANGED BY THE COLOMBIAN ARMY AND HAVE BEEN IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE COLOMBIAN ARMY MEDICAL AUTHORITIES. A SIMULTANEOUS TEST OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A NEWLY COMBINED FDA APPROVED FUNGICIDE TINACTIN-M CREAM WAS ALSO CONDUCTED. GEN VALENCIA TOVAR'S STATEMENT THAT DOCTORS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES ARE TAKING PART IN THE EXPERIMENTS MUST INCLUDE COLOMBIAN S WHO ARE WORKING WITH THE LETTERMAN INSTITUTE TEAM. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THERE ARE NO THIRD COUNTRY MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC PERSONNEL WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM AT THIS TIME IN COLOMBIA. WHITE

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**TAGS:** MILI, TBIO, CO, US  
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